

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 7, 8 and 10 are pending. Support for the amendment to claim 8 may be found in the specification as originally filed, for example, in Figure 1, page 4, line 25-page 5, line 2, page 5, lines 24-25, page 11, lines 3-5, and page 1, lines 9-10.

I. The Art Rejections

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Mitchell et al (US 6,350,097, previously cited).

Claims 1-7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Dickinson in view of Mitchell.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is not anticipated by or obvious over the disclosures of Mitchell, alone or together with Dickinson, and request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections in view of the following remarks.

The Examiner's repeated position is that the arms of the cited art need only be capable of inherently having such movements and that the movements themselves do not need to be explicitly disclosed in the cited art.

Applicants have amended independent claim 8 to recite a controller. The Examiner has stated that the arms of Mitchell could be controlled such that a carefully executed combination of vertical and rotational motion would allow the swing arms to simultaneously enter the load lock. However, Mitchell does not teach or disclose or provide any reason to use a controller that controls the arms to do so as in amended claim 8.

The Examiner has stated that Mitchell and Dickinson clearly disclose controls “capable” of operating the arms in the manner set forth. However, to meet the pending claims, a controller in the cited art must perform the claimed control function. The capability to change and modify a controller to perform a different control function than that of the controller of cited art is not inherently the same controller as a controller that performs the control function as claimed. That is, the cited art does not teach or disclose or provide any reason to use a controller for performing the claimed controller function as claimed. Rather, the controller of the cited art is a different controller that performs a different control function as disclosed in the cited art.

The claimed controller controls the internal arm to exchange a process object held on the lift table of the first load-lock mechanism with another process object held by the holding mechanism at the load position. The claimed controller can not be inherently met by a controller that performs a different control function. The different controller of the cited art is different than the claimed controller in that it controls performing a different control function, the control function as in the cited art. The controller of the cited art does not inherently have the capability for performing the control function as claimed. Rather, in order to perform the same controller function as claimed, the controller of the cited art must be changed. Again, there is no reason for one skilled in the art to change the controller of the cited art.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claims 1-4, 7, 8 and 10 is neither taught by nor made obvious from the disclosures of Mitchell, alone or

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together with Dickinson, and it is requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

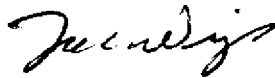
II. Conclusion

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that their claimed invention is allowable and ask that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 be reconsidered and withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that this case is in condition for allowance and allowance is respectfully solicited.

If any points remain at issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the local exchange number listed below.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
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